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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 9 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group and at the behest thereof, I should like to draw your attention to the recent escalation triggered by the Israeli occupying power, consisting in the carrying out of excavation work in the sensitive area surrounding Al-Haram al-Sharif (sacred precinct of Al-Aqsa Mosque) in the city of Al-Quds al-Sharif, where Israeli equipment has carried out operations of demolition and excavation of the historic way leading to the Maghariba Gate, one of the principal gates connected with the Western Wall of the Haram al-Sharif, on flimsy pretexts, i.e., the rebuilding of the path, alleging that this will not affect the foundations of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The States members of the Arab Group condemn these acts, which constitute a dangerous escalation and flagrant aggression against Islamic holy places, and consider the provocative measures taken by Israel as constituting a clear violation of the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 465 (1980). In those resolutions, the international community emphasized that all measures taken by Israel, the occupying power, including legislative and administrative measures, aimed at altering the legal status of the occupied city of Al-Quds and its demographic structure, are null and void. In many of its resolutions, moreover, the Security Council reaffirmed the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Al-Quds.

The fact that Israel, the occupying power, has carried out this grave act of aggression casts doubt on its earnestness regarding the reactivation of the peace process aimed at a just settlement of the Palestinian question on the basis of the resolutions constituting international legitimacy, first and foremost Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the principle of land for peace, the road map and the Arab peace initiative.

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What is more, such practices can only preclude any possibility of negotiations on final solution issues, the most important being the question of Al-Quds, through the creation of new facts on the ground aimed at imposing a fait accompli and prejudicing the outcome of the negotiations.

The members of the Arab Group, warning of the consequences of continued demolition and excavation work to obliterate Islamic landmarks in the area surrounding Al-Aqsa Mosque, owing to the negative repercussions and grave consequences of such acts on peace and security in the region, call upon the Security Council, as the body charged under the Charter of the United Nations with maintaining international peace and security, to take immediate emergency measures to put a stop the Israeli Government's plans and prevail upon it to respect the resolutions constituting international legitimacy.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) Abdullah Ahmed Mohamed **Al-Murad**
Chairman of the Arab Group and Permanent Representative
of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations